

Originally this species was described by Hope (1841) as *M. nigripennis*, but subsequently Shaum (1848) also described the same species as *M. melanopus*. Arrow (1910) has preferred to retain the latter name as valid. This species is distributed over north-east India (Khasi Hills, Jantia Hill, Manipur, Assam), Bangla Desh (Sylhet), Burma (N. Khayen Hills) and Siam.

Identity of this species can be made by its black elytra with clypeus, angular basal prolongation between the eyes, lateral and hind margins of pronotum except a black spot in the middle of lateral borders, sides of the metasternum, hind coxae and antennal club yellow (Fig. 1).

In the present series of specimens an interesting case of variation in the pronotal spots has been observed. There is evident prolongation of the middle black patch, towards the basal angles of the pronotum (Fig. 2), which ultimately tends to give rise to two small spots (Fig. 4). In another specimen a distinct downward extension of middle black patch towards the base of pronotum has been observed which joins the base of the pronotum (Figs. 3, 4 and 5). There is a strong presumption that the species with 5 spots, four lateral and one basal, may be found in nature if intensive survey is made (Fig. 6).

There is no evidence whether this type of variation in the pronotal spots is due to geographical distribution since all these specimens are collected from the same locality in Shillong. However, their genetical significance cannot be ruled out for the reason that they are from the same population sample.

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#### References

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## *Argema kuhnei* Pinhey and *A. mimosae* (Bsd.) (Lepidoptera, Saturniidae) — A Comparison

By D. G. SEVASTOPULO, F.R.E.S.

Mr Kuhne's detailed notes on *A. kuhnei* (1973, *Entomologist's Record*, 85: 27-30) reveal a number of differences between it and the better known *A. mimosae*.

There is a considerable difference in the appearance of the full grown larvae, the scoli of *mimosae* are fleshy cones, the base extending to both margins of the somite and meeting that of the opposite scoli mid-dorsally, whilst that of *kuhnei*, judging from the figure, is an erect Eiffel Tower

affair. Generally the larva of *mimosae* is a far stouter and more compact larva than that figured for *kuhnei*. The colour is much the same, *mimosae* being a beautiful green with the intersegmental divisions whitish, spiracles greenish yellow with a white dot at each end. Thoracic legs reddish purple, prolegs green with yellow feet. Head brown. The fourth instar larva is very similar to the adult. The first instar larva is orange tinged with blackish with a black head and a subdorsal, lateral and sublateral series of small fleshy scoli. The second instar larva is at first scarlet, gradually becoming green as the instar progresses, the scoli of the first instar being replaced by fleshy cones. The third instar is intermediate between the second and fourth.

All my larvae have been reared from ova laid by captive females, so that I am not in a position to comment on their habits in the wild.

The only food-plant recorded for *mimosae* is *Sclerocarya caffra* Sond. (Anacardiaceae). The family Dipterothripidae, to which *Monotes* belongs, does not appear to grow in East Africa.

The cocoon of *mimosae*, as noted in a short paper (1973, *Entomologist's Record*, **85**: 67) appears to have more perforations than that of *kuhnei*. I cannot agree with the suggestion that these perforations are for drainage or ventilation; the normal Saturniid cocoon is fully waterproof. It appears more likely that these holes may give vertebrate predators the impression that the pupa has been parasitised and the parasites have emerged. Some Lasiocampids, *Dollmannia purpurascens* (Auriv.) for example, produce a similar effect by incorporating small tufts of very short black setae in the fabric of the cocoon. The Arctiid *Nyctemera apicalis* Wlk. covers its cocoon with numerous multi-celled pellets of white froth, produced from the anus, and containing an oily liquid with a strong Coccinellid-like smell, which gives the appearance of a mass of ichneumon cocoons.

The pupa of *kuhnei* appears to be stouter and more contracted than that of *mimosae*.

I cannot comment on the duration of the pupal stage as all my pupae have died, if sprinkled they rot and if left unsprinkled they dry up, and it would appear that they have a very narrow tolerance of humidity.

Unlike *kuhnei*, with its comparatively short flight period, *mimosae* flies all through the year. I have not noticed that *mimosae* is particularly subject to damage, an occasional tail is broken off but that is to be expected given the shape of the moth, and I wonder if the reason for the greater apparent damage to *kuhnei* is due to its being caught in traps. My mercury vapour lamp stands against a rough-cast wall, on which the moths attracted settle. Bats do capture *mimosae*, as I frequently find severed wings near the lamp.

As regards the natural camouflage of these moths, I cannot do better than quote Seitz, *Indo-Australian Bombyces*,

p. 497:—"In fact it is rather difficult to discover an *Actias* sitting amongst the leaves of bushes. Only freshly hatched specimens resting on trunks or posts to stretch their wings are more easily found. In a valley of Ceylon, where I daily collected without ever seeing any *Actias*, one day after the leaves of the small trees had been singed black by a plantation fire, I was surprised to see the great number of *Actias selene* which sat in the burnt foliage, now visible from afar as so many green spots, their protective colour rendered ineffective."

Mombasa, 13.v.73.

## Notes and Observations

*NYMPHALIS ANTIOPA* L. IN CORNWALL IN 1973.—Mr Alexander Gray, of Treswithian near Camborne, phoned me to say that he and his wife had seen a Camberwell Beauty (*N. antiopa* L.) in their garden on 17th August. They immediately recognised the butterfly, as they had both seen it previously on the Continent, and I am therefore quite sure that this is a reliable report. As far as I am able to ascertain, this is the first record of the species for Cornwall since 1949, when one was mentioned in *Entomologist*, **83**: 130, but without date, locality or name of observer. — Dr F. H. N. Smith, Turnstones, Perran-coombe, Perranporth, Cornwall. 20.viii.-1973.

*ANTHOCHARIS CARDAMINES* L. AB. *DECOLORATA* CARUEL IN SUSSEX.—On 12th May 1973, I took a remarkable ♀ ab. of this butterfly which Mr D. Carter of the Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist) has kindly identified as an extreme form of ab. *decolorata* Caruel. My specimen is characterised particularly by the yellow coloration of the normally dark green markings on the underside hindwings, and the replacement of the normal blackish markings on the upperside forewings and hindwings by those of a very pale grey. I should be interested to hear from anyone who may have knowledge of this unusual form. — COLIN PRATT, Oleander, 5 View Road, Peacehaven, Newhaven, Sussex.

*HYLES GALLII* ROTT. IN YORKSHIRE.—On the morning of 2nd August 1973, my friend Mr P. Gunson found a rather worn specimen of this moth in his m.v. trap at Emley. It was a ♀, and after feeding on honey it laid a few ova during the following days. This is the second *gallii* to have occurred here, Mr Gunson having taken one in excellent condition in his m.v. trap on the night of 9th July 1971. — N. GILL, 26 Mount Pleasant, Emley, near Huddersfield, Yorkshire, HD8 9RY.